

Siesta Key Chapel Congregational Study Results

Siesta Key Chapel Congregational Study Committee

Bob Kuck
Kathleen Shinn
Frank Miller
Connie Watson
Rick Chenoweth
Francie Hall
Tim Gannon
Supported by Tom Cook

To help discover the leader that God is calling to Siesta Key Chapel, and to give the Pastor Nominating Committee solid ground to begin its search, the Session of Siesta Key Chapel has completed an in depth congregational study. They did so by calling upon highly qualified and trusted leaders to take an honest look at who we are and to discover the direction of God's calling for Siesta Key Chapel.

Siesta Key Chapel is in a transition time between called pastors. The results as detailed in this summary of the Congregational Study will provide the Pastor Nominating Committee with significant indicators for the final phase of selecting the pastor who will lead our congregation in the direction God chooses.

This is not the first time Siesta Key Chapel has chosen a new pastor, but it is a special time as we approach celebrating our 50th anniversary as a Presbyterian congregation. We are an enduring fellowship uniquely situated on a tropical island considered to be an international recreation mecca. It is also a special time because our church has just completed its longest pastoral term of fifteen years with Pastor Kathi Wiggins who lead with unique pastoral skills, motivated us to grow in our faith and mission. During Pastor Wiggins tenure, she also assisted in the oversight of the structural additions to our campus that further enhanced our natural surroundings and setting.

During this interim time, it is vitally important that we match the new called pastor to our congregation, not unlike matching the right mates for a marriage. This process is not to be likened to finding the right CEO or COO for a business. This is the time to identify the right pastor with whom we can build trust, commitment, respect, love, grace, and a deep sense of caring. These were all qualities our congregants expressed that they appreciated about Pastor Kathi Wiggins during the Congregational Study. The indicators the congregation provided serve as a reminder to the Pastoral Nominating Committee that the "relationship" between the Pastor and the congregation is a key factor in the Pastoral selection process.

Scriptures are full of important transitions between spiritual leaders like Moses and Joshua; David and Solomon; Elijah and Elisha; Jesus on Mt. Tabor at the transfiguration with Moses and Elijah as well as Jesus and his disciples in to the post Easter world of Acts.

Every new leader brings unique gifts and qualities to their role in a faith community. They will have gifts and qualities that enhance the direction God is planning for the church. Every leader brings new eyes, ideas and enthusiasm to a church's ministry.

The Congregational Study Committee's approach was three fold. They conducted a demographic study through a program called MissionInsite, which compares demographic information about a specific church to the demographic information of the area the church supports. The committee then conducted Appreciative Inquiry Interviews of 120+ members, affiliates and friends of Siesta Key Chapel. The study was completed with a congregational survey with specific questions using a program called Survey Monkey. This information confirms the good qualities that make Siesta Key Chapel such an inviting place. The congregation's responses in the small group personal interviews and in the congregational survey reflect a significant interest in ministries targeting families and youth education while maintaining high quality ministries for older adults.

MissionInsite Demographic Study Summary

The Demographic Study was developed using MissionInsite. MissionInsite provides a tool that enabled the Congregational Study Committee to review relevant and strategic information on not only our congregation but also the past, present and future populations of our surrounding community including changing demographic patterns. The information gathered tells us that less than half of our congregation lives on the Siesta Key and that about 40% of congregants at SKC are considered affiliates. The average age of SKC is somewhere around 73 and only 24 members have birthdays after 1960. MissionInsite drills down deeper to tell us that the three fastest growing demographics from the Siesta Key out to McIntosh are people 75 years and older as expected but equal in growth are the demographic base of people 25-39 years old and as well as the demographic base of their children who are 0-17 years old. Commonly, when the conversation comes up regarding the lack of Sunday School at our church, our congregants say that there are no children on Siesta Key. The MissionInsite data shows this is not true and is confirmed by the Out of Door Academy (ODA) leadership who shared that 80% of their students come from within a five-mile radius of the Siesta Key Campus. There are also two other elementary schools within 2 miles of Siesta Key. David Mahler, the Head of School shared that when he was hired at ODA, the goal was to "shut down" the campus but the demographics and parents prevented it from happening. MissionInsite has also provided important information about the demographic preferences in a church home, which are to be warm and friendly, offer quality sermons and provide for social activities.

MissionInsite Demographic Study Detail:

The important congregational findings are as follows:

- ~42% of Siesta Key Chapel congregants are on Siesta Key
- ~16% of Siesta Key Chapel congregants are west of 41 and not on Siesta Key

- ~58% of Siesta Key Chapel congregants are east of 41 and Siesta Key
- ~59% are members versus affiliates
- Average Age of all congregants is ~73
- Average age of members only is ~71
- 24 congregants with birthdays 1960 or after

The important demographic findings are as follows:

- Total Population – no significant change in the next 5 years
- 13% of total population is seasonal
- Population Forecast (2028)
 - 33% of the population will be 0-34 years old
 - 31% of the population will be 35-64
 - 36% of the population will be 65+
- Growing demographics by age
 - 0 – 17
 - 25 – 39
 - 75 +

Top Three Preferences in a Church Home

- Warm and Friendly Encounters
- Quality of Sermons
- Social Activities

Congregational Appreciative Inquiry Interviews

The committee performed interviews of more than 120 congregants of Siesta Key Chapel. The interviews were performed using the Appreciative Inquiry method. Appreciative Inquiry focuses on leveraging Siesta Key Chapel’s positive core strengths to help drive a sustainable future. Looking for the positive, the committee created the following summary based on life giving church experiences, what makes people stay at the chapel (Velcro factors) and the dreams, aspirations & possibilities of Siesta Key Chapel with no constraints. It was discovered that what drew many people to the Chapel is the unique building, the setting, the natural environment and the excellent worship experience. Even in its brief history, there is a deep sense of family traditions as some third generation families of charter members continue to worship here. Great preaching is very important for those who are members and affiliates and equally important in making first impressions to potential members. This expectation is confirmed by the results of the congregational survey. All of these church experiences are supported by a deep sense of hospitality congregants felt when they first came to SKC, many of whom had been invited to come by friends, neighbors and even strangers. When our congregants first arrived at Siesta Key

Chapel they sensed of strong feeling of community, which we want to continue into the future.

The many reasons for our congregants continued loyalty include great preaching and excellent worship as well as the growing engagement in the missions of the church such as Beth El, Selah Freedom and Harvest House. Much of our congregation's involvement comes because individuals were **invited** to be part of Committees and Organizations. Involvement in the Presbyterian Women and the Men's Groups was frequently mentioned in the interviews along with other fellowship activities such the dinners for eight and other small group gatherings were recounted frequently. It is important to note that the **"invitation"** to participate is critical to the involvement of our congregants. It was also frequently mentioned that while we are a Presbyterian Church USA, this congregation is welcoming to people from all denominations. While there is a strong sense of connection with Peace River Presbytery, denominationalism is not a defining factor in Siesta Key Chapel's ministries or missions. People also recounted counseling experiences with past ministers and felt this was an important factor in their continued relationship with the church.

Regarding dreams, aspirations and possibilities, many people sighted the need to build and develop children's ministries and youth programs. Developing relationships with younger families is a congregational priority for the future of Siesta Key Chapel. The interviews provided many ideas for attracting families so these ministries need to be considered. Many of the interviewees mentioned developing our relationship with the Out of Door Academy. The Out of Door Academy played a prominent role in beginning years of Siesta Key Chapel including selling the land to our charter members. It was the belief of interviewees that this relationship should be leveraged as we reach new families. Other community outreach possibilities mentioned included creating a beach ministry and the development of a more visible prayer ministry in the church. Marketing and communication opportunities should be explored to not only invite people to the Chapel but also to keep our seasonal congregants engaged the entire year. It was felt by many, and it is reflected in our survey results, that SKC should move more toward a blended worship service especially when it comes to music. While controversial, expanding the use of technology in worship and adding high quality monitors to the sanctuary should be considered to support those who are visually impaired and to help the Chapel move toward the future. The value of a music outreach to the community by offering music and vocal lessons to the community was offered several times in the interviews. Finally, it was suggested that we explore how we can simply and effectively reach out of the neighbors of the Chapel.

Congregational Appreciative Inquiry Interviews Detail

Church Experiences

- Friendliness, Hospitality, Invitational, Sense of Community
- Campus Facilities, Environment, Architecture
- Great Preaching, Relatable, Contextual, Biblical, Uplifting

- Family Traditions
- Mission Emphasis
- Fellowship Opportunities
- Special Worship Services

Velcro Factors, What Makes Us Stick

- Missions: Selah Freedom, Beth El, etc.
- PW, MG, Circles, Deacons
- Invitation and Engagement in Committees & Organizations
- Fellowship Activities
- Preaching
- Counseling
- Sense of Worth, Feeling Included, Affirmed
- Sense of Small Church Christian Fellowship
- Welcoming of All Denominations

Dreams, Aspirations & Possibilities:

- Build Youth Education Programs: Sunday School, Youth Ministry Program, Youth Activities
- Hire Youth/Family Minister or Director
- Develop Relationship with ODA
 - Hospitality for ODA moms/dads – coffee and donuts at drop-off
 - Movie Time
 - Mentoring Program
 - Young Readers
- Invite Neighbors for SKC Open House
- Survey Successful Youth Programs
- Invite Youth to Run Technology
- Create Beach Ministry
- Develop Prayer Ministry
- Provide Music and Vocal Lessons
- Expand Outreach: Keeping Snowbirds Engaged, Trips for Adults & Youth, Socialization for Older Adults

- Provide Training for Evangelism Including Family & Friendship Evangelism
- Add (Blend or Separate) Traditional, Contemporary Worship and/or Saturday Evening Service
- Use Technology in Service – LED Screens
- Continue Adult Confirmation Classes
- Expand Marketing & Communication Including SKC Brochures at Community Venues
- Provide Children’s Worship Activity Kit to Be Used During Service

Congregational Survey Summary

Finally, the committee designed and elicited a congregant survey using SurveyMonkey.com. The questions were designed by the committee to get a better understanding of the needs, wants and desires of the congregation. In total there were 20 questions, and the respondents had the opportunity to provide their name and contact information or stay anonymous. We had a total of 109 responses. The survey responses were used to substantiate the information provided by the congregation in the Appreciative Interviews. The online survey was sent to members of the congregation three separate times. The survey was also made available on the website and paper copies were handed to those who were not comfortable with technologies. 109 people responded, 72 were active members, 95 attend worship at least 3 times per month. 55 of the respondents attend SKC year round and 42 attend at least six months of the year.

At the end of the survey you find data pertaining directly to the pastoral search that indicates that there is an expectations for high quality preaching (94%). The new pastor should be a capable counselor is supported by 69%, a teacher (59%), a spiritual leader (54%) and administrator (41%); and available for hospital and home visitation (34%).

The top ten characteristics in order of their preferred priority and which correspond directly to the Mission Information Form to be completed by the Pastor Nominating Committee are: Preaching and worship leadership (92%); Spiritual Maturity (63%); Advisor (59%); a Teacher (58%); Interpersonal Engagement (55%); Decision Making (54%); Compassionate (53%); Collaboration (45%); Flexibility (43%); Organizational Agility (40%) and a Bridge Builder (40%) the tenth being a tie.

Regarding worship: Sermon messages should be relevant (77%); should have a take away point and be biblical was tied at 66%. 64% indicated that music should be blended and 22% indicated that it should “always be traditional.” 25% indicated that screens in worship would enhance worship experiences, 42% felt it would distract, 40% were neutral. 56% said communion six times a year was enough 42% would like it 12 times a year.

69% of the respondents felt the internship program is extremely valuable or valuable. Regarding educational opportunities 24% say they attend regularly, 29% frequently and

47% stated that they rarely or never attend. 53% were neutral about the Theologian in Residence Program, 47 % find it valuable or extremely valuable.

Pertaining directly to the Mission Information Form and the experience of the new called pastor 53% were neutral about the level of experience required for the next pastor; 39% felt the new pastor should have at least 10 years experience; 16% felt that the new pastor should have at least 5 years experience.

46% were neutral about the age of the next pastor, 17% felt the next pastor should be 36-45; 36% believe the pastor age should be between 46-55. 51% were neutral about where the next pastor should live, 28% believe the next pastor should live within a five-mile radius, 17% felt it should with a ten-mile radius. Only 3% felt the next pastor should live on the Key. 70% thought the church should offer a housing allowance. 73% were neutral on the next minister's involvement in a service club or community organization. 69% believe the next minister should be engaged in ecumenical/interfaith dialogue.

Congregational Survey Detail

72 of the 109 respondents were "Active members".

95 of the respondents attend a worship service 3 or more times a month.

55 of the respondents attend year round and 42 attend at least 6 months a year.

Sermon messages should be relevant (77% of respondents), should have a point to take away (66% of respondents) and should be biblical (66% of respondents).

Music should be blended (64% of the respondents), 22% of the respondents said "always traditional".

The "video screens in worship": 25% said it would add to their worship experience, 42% said it would distract from their worship experience and 40% are neutral.

57% of respondents enjoy children in worship, 37% are neutral and 7% don't like it.

The number of times we offer communion in worship is split 56% like it 6 times a year and 42% would like it 12 times a year.

51% of the respondents enjoy lay leaders in worship and 49% are neutral on this point.

69% of respondents find our internship program valuable or extremely valuable.

The responses for "educational opportunities": 24% attend regularly, 29% frequently, 31% attend rarely and 16% almost never attend.

53% of the respondents are neutral on the Theologian in residence program and 47% find it valuable or extremely valuable.

54% of the respondents are neutral on how much experience our next pastor should have in a Parish. 39% believe the Pastor should have at least 10 years in a Parish, and 16% believe the Pastor should have at least 5 years in a Parish.

46% of the respondents are neutral on the age of our next Pastor. 17% believe the Pastor should be 36-45, 36% believe the Pastor should be 46-55 and 5% believe the Pastor should be 55-65, and 0% Pastor should be over 65.

Most of the respondents (51%) are neutral on where the next Pastor should live. 28% believe the Pastor should live within 5 miles of the chapel and 17% said they should live within a 10-mile radius of the chapel. Only 3% said the Pastor should live on Siesta Key.

70% of the respondents believe the church should offer the new Pastor a housing allowance.

The four most important characteristics in a new pastor (showing the top 6)

Preacher	93.58%
Counselor	68.81%
Teacher	58.72%
Spiritual development	54.13%
Administrator	41.28%
Hospital and home visitations	33.94%

73% of respondents are neutral on whether our next minister should be engaged in a service club or other community organization.

69% of respondents believe it is important that our next minister be engaged in interfaith/ecumenical dialogue.

The 10 most important leadership competencies the respondents would like to see in the new Pastor:

Top 11 (tie for 10th place):

- Preaching and worship leadership – is an effective preacher and worship leader - 92%
- Spiritual Maturity – shows strong personal depth and spiritual grounding – 63%
- Advisor – An individual others can turn to for counsel and guidance – 59%
- Teacher – creates learning environments where students actively participate – 58%

Interpersonal engagement – Displays a consistent ability to build solid relationships of trust and engage people – 55%

Decision-making – Makes effective decisions, balancing analysis, wisdom, experience and judgment – 54%

Compassionate – has the ability to suffer with others – 53%

Collaboration – Has a natural orientation toward getting people to work together – 45%

Flexibility – adapts behavior and work methods in response to new information, changing conditions, and unexpected obstacles -43%

Organizational agility – Is astute about how congregations work – 40%

Bridge builder – Possessing a responsibility for the unity of the congregation – 40%

Other notables:

Motivator – Creates sustains an organizational culture that promotes engagement – 36%

Writer – be able to express him/herself well in all written forms – 36%

Strategy and vision – Sees ahead clearly, keeping focused on larger picture – 34%

Hopeful – maintains stability in the moment and hope for the future – 33%

Lifelong learner – uses every experience in life as a tool for growth – 29%

Change agent – Has ability to lead the change process successfully – 27%

Technologically savvy – ability to navigate in the world of technology – 27%